

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED BY THE EIGHTH
GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP N 1 SURAKARTA
IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL**



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ABSTRACT

This research aims at identifying the type and the dominant type of communication strategies used by the eighth grade students of SMP N 1 Surakarta, and their function in developing speaking skill in the conversation. The data are the transcript of conversations which are made by the respondent in a speaking class. The data are taken by the researcher through observation, and recorded using tape recorder. They are analyzed by Tarone's theory of communication strategies. Triangulation is used to make credibility of the data. The researcher uses inter-rater reliability to establish the credibility of findings from an analysis. The findings of the research are: (1) the respondents use all the type of communication strategies, namely: a) topic avoidance, b) message abandonment, c) paraphrase, d) coinage, e) native language switching, f) miming and g) appeal for assistance, (2) the dominant type of communication strategies used by the respondents is native language switching with the percentage 35. 29%, and (3) the function of communication strategies type is to develop speaking skill through reaching communicative competence by using five types of communication strategies, namely: a) paraphrase, b) coinage, c) native language switching, d) miming and e) appeal for assistance.

Keywords: communication strategies, communicative competence, speaking skill

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of English Language Teaching (ELT) is to develop the students' communicative competence in which the students are expected to be able to communicate messages in various communicative situations especially in spoken form. Thus, communicative competence has five components, namely grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence (Canale and Swain (1980), and another component is actional competence (Celce-Murcia (1995). Bailey and Savage (1994: vii) in Fauziati (2010: 15) state that "speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills". So, speaking cannot be seen as an easy task to be learned but vice-versa, it is a formidable one. It leads the researcher to observe several problems when the Indonesian English learners communicate in English. She has observed the Indonesian English learners in various proficiency levels, from basic to advance level. Most of them feel difficult to speak English as their foreign language. Although they are, they do not seem having an intention to speak in English. They keep speaking in Bahasa Indonesia and only few English words to be spoken by them. Basically, it is because that speaking is not only about "to speak", but also how a speaker gives feedback to her speaking partner during a conversation in her foreign language spontaneously. Besides, limited knowledge of English can make them difficult to express the intended message in their conversation.

To overcome the previous problem, a strategy must be applied in speaking class whether to overcome the lack of learners' speaking skill or to develop learners' speaking skill. Thus, communication strategies can be taken as a consideration as strategies to overcome the problems above, helping the learners to ease their real communication. "With reference to speaking, strategic competence points out the ability to know how to keep a conversation going, how to terminate the conversation, and how to clear up communication breakdowns and comprehension problems" (Shumin, 1994) in (Yaman, Irgin, and Kavazoglu, 2013: 1). In addition, Felix (in Tarone, 1981: 63) in (Fauziati, 2010: 167) maintains that "Communication strategies may viewed as attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second language learner and the linguistic knowledge of the target language interlocutor in a real communication".

Even more, Cohen, Weaver and Li (1998) claimed the use of strategies in communication raises learners' language awareness and solves the interlocutors' potential communication problems. Dörnyei (1995) asserted that communication strategies develop learners' oral proficiency. "It is believed that learners' communicative skills can be

improved by developing strategies for communication” (Yaman, Irgin, and Kavazoglu, 2013: 256). Fauziati (2010: 167-168) states that, “communication strategies refer to strategic competence.” Thus, there are four components of communicative competence according to Hyme (1983) in Fauziati (2010: 168), namely:

- 1) Grammatical competence
Knowledge of the language code such as grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.
- 2) Discourse competence
Ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive texts (e.g. political speech, poetry).
- 3) Sociolinguistic competence
Mastery of the sociocultural code of language use such as appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in a given situation.
- 4) Strategic competence
Knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and where enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns.

Furthermore, based on the problems which have been discussed, the researcher is interested in conducting research focusing on communication strategies used by eighth grade students in developing their English speaking skill at SMP N 1 Surakarta year 2014/ 2015. The first reason, the researcher would like to observe the communication strategies used by the eighth grade students in speaking class. Furthermore, the researcher would like to contribute for the improvement of students’ speaking ability by conducting this research, because, technically, conducting this research means the researcher socializes the communication strategies for both teachers and students who might not know about the existence of communication strategies.

There are many studies related to the development of speaking ability, but, they are not concerned with the communication strategies in developing speaking ability. Besides, to know more about the specific classification of the communication strategies can be very useful for learners in their speaking skill development.

Thus, there are many taxonomies of communication strategies, such as Dornyei's taxonomy, Celce-Murcia, et al.'s taxonomy, and Tarone's taxonomy. The taxonomies are quit similar, but there are also some differences between them. Tarone classifies communication strategies into some categorizations, they are topic avoidance, message abandonment, the use of paraphrase, coinage (creating new words), native language switching, miming, and appeal for assistance.

Furthermore, the researcher chooses Tarone's taxonomy with reasons that Tarone's taxonomy is simple and easy to be understood and a good example to understand what is meant by communication strategy. In other words, the researcher hopes in using the Tarone's taxonomy as the theory which is used to analyse the data, the readers of this research can understand easily on what the meaning of communication strategies are. So, this research is only focused on the description of communication strategies types, the dominant type, and their functions used by the respondents analysed by Tarone's taxonomy.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research carried out belongs to descriptive qualitative research since it is conducted to describe the findings. The objects of the research are the communication strategies types, the dominant type, and their functions of communication strategies used by the respondents. The subjects of this research are the eighth grade students of SMP N 1 Surakarta. The data are information of communication strategies used by the eighth grade students in speaking class on field-note form. The data include students' attitude in learning English speaking skill as their foreign language, their behaviour toward English speaking skill, and their habits of using strategies in learning English especially to master speaking skill which is reflected in the conversations made by them.

In addition, there are three sources of the data, namely: event, respondent, and documents. Those will be explained below:

1. Event : It is the English conversation in speaking class done by the eighth grade students in class VIII A on Monday, August 18, 2014 at 7 a.m. to 8.20 a.m. at SMP N 1 Surakarta.
2. Respondent : The students in VIII A at SMP N 1 Surakarta.
3. Document : The recording transcript during teaching speaking.

Thus, the researcher applies three methods in collecting data, namely documentation, observation, and interview. By applying observation and documentation, the researcher gets a bunch of information needed. Furthermore, the researcher develops the information using credibility of the data by using triangulation, focusing on inter-rater reliability to establish the consistency of findings from an analysis. To analyse the data in this qualitative research, the researcher uses three techniques, namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion or verification.

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions (Miles, 1992: 15). The researcher only selects the data which are relevant with the research problems. The data is selected from observation. The researcher only focuses on the data which is related to the using of communication strategies used by the respondent. In addition the chosen data is classified to the Tarone's Taxonomy as the theory which is chosen to analyze the data.

After being reduced and selected, the data are displayed to classify them based on Tarone's taxonomy including the types of communication strategies, the dominant type, and their functions used by the respondents analysed by Tarone's taxonomy. The taken data from observation is about the communication strategies types, the dominant type, and their functions used by the respondents analysed by Tarone's taxonomy. All the data in utterances form will be presented in appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4. Meanwhile, the analysis of the data will be presented in a description form. The last step is drawing conclusion where the researcher writes the conclusion based on the finding. The conclusion must be about the types communication strategies, the dominant type, and their functions used by the respondents analysed by Tarone's taxonomy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher has found one hundred and nine (109) utterances from eight (8) conversations which have made by eight (8) groups. The researcher has found all communication strategies' types which are represented by fifty one (51) utterances which have spoken by the students. Thus, the researcher would like to divide the findings into three parts: 1) the type of communication strategies, 2) the dominant type of communication strategies used by the respondents, and 3) the function of communication strategies

1) The type of communication strategies

The researcher has found all types of communication strategies which are used by the eighth grade students. Furthermore, the researcher has found two (2) utterances which represent topic avoidance, eight (8) utterances which represent message abandonment, three (3) utterances which represent paraphrase, a utterance which represents coinage, nineteen (19) utterances which represent native language switching, ten (10) utterances which represent miming, and nine (9) utterances which represent appeal for assistance of the communication strategies' type.

a. Topic avoidance

An example utterance of topic avoidance is on the underline sentence below:

Ema : “Emmm, tomorrow we will celebrate the ee [4s] our school will celebrate the independent’s day. So we mm (laughing) mm [3s] have a kind of mm (creating a circle form with her hands) mm [4s] contests.” (After she finished the utterance, she pointed her interlocutor, giving sign in order to respond her.)

Hani : “What the big of the contest?”

Bintang : “Mmm [5s] mm yes mm what [6s] the [7s].”

Ema : “Ha? Say loudly!”

Bintang : “Say loudly.”

Ema : “*(Ya Alloh, say loudly itu artinya keras. Kamu ngomong lebih keras, Helmi!)*”

Bintang : (kept silent)

Ema : “Ya sudah stand comedy now you do it now! C’mon do it now!”

From the explanation above, it is known that the speaker within the conversation has used topic avoidance appropriate with Tarone's theory, which means, the speaker uses it when she get difficult topic that will be brought in a conversation. Hence, they prefer to change the topic or to end and to say goodbye instead of continuing the running conversation. This situation also found in the three previous studies which presented previously where the learners of foreign language use this kind of communication strategy to help them avoiding a conversation with unfriendly topic.

b. Message Abandonment

There are eight (8) utterances which represent the type of communication strategies of message abandonment type. One of the eight examples is below:

Nadya : “Emmm, tomorrow we will celebrate the ee [4s] our school will celebrate the independent's day. So we mm (laughing) mm [3s] have a kind of mm (creating a circle form with her hands) mm [4s] contests.” (After she finished the utterance, she pointed her interlocutor, giving sign in order to respond her.)

Fadil : “What the big of the contest?”

Adrian: “Mmm [5s] mm yes mm what [6s] the [7s].”

Tarone's taxonomy proposes that message abandonment is used when the speaker has limited vocabulary in a topic which she has deal within her conversation. In previous example, the researcher also finds that message abandonment is applied by the speakers when he does not have idea on what to say next because of his lack vocabulary.

c. Paraphrase

There are three utterances which show the use paraphrase type of communication strategies used by the eighth grade students at SMP N 1 Surakarta. One of the examples is below:

Daniel : “Ow, nice. But what is tumpeng competition?”

Arista : “Hmm, Daniel, tumpeng competition is you make tumpeng for the competition. Tumpeng is rice that have beautiful decoration with some traditional foods such as kering tempe, omelette, noodle, mmm [4s] what else ya .. [5s] chicken and so on.”

The examples shows that the speaker uses this strategy when she tries to make her interlocutor understand her intended meaning in her utterance by using description technique.

d. Coinage

The researcher has found only one (1) coinage strategy and it will be discussed in this part of this research. Furthermore, the utterance can be read in the underline letters as follows:

Hera : “Mm, you just bring foods from your house.”

Farah : “Mm, what kind of foods?”

Hera : “You can bring mm nasi uduk mmm what is it yellow rice, and some foods for decoration such as mm [5s] kering tempe, telur dadar (eh) omellete, then mm [5s] chicken lapis, perkedel, abon and so on.”

The only coinage strategy which has found by the researcher in her research is strongly supported by Tarone’s taxonomy which have presented previously. It is proven by speaker’s intention in creating new word when she does not know the exact English word, while, she hopes to express her derived meaning to her interlocutor.

e. Native Language Switching

The researcher has found eighteen (18) representative utterances for this strategy. One example can be read below:

Bety : “Okay, the competition is, first, singing competition and mmm [4s], decoration tumpeng competition, mm, [4s], competition and [3s]”.

This finding appropriates to the theory of communication strategies proposed by Tarone in which the speaker switches the target language into her native language when she does not know the exact word in the target language and does not have idea to create the new word (coinage) in her spontaneous conversation she is in.

f. Miming

There are ten (10) utterances which categorized into miming strategy. One example is follows:

Tito : “I day. Example mm [6s] history of Indonesia (miming: boxing), to fight to mm freedom.”

Tarone’s taxonomy agrees that miming is used when the speaker wants to make her meaning clearer by using non-verbal communication such as gesture and imitation. Thus, in this discussion, the speakers use gesture in her running conversation. It implies that speakers apply Tarone’s taxonomy in using miming strategy.

g. Appeal for Assistance

The researcher has found 9 (nine) utterance which categorized into appeal for assistance type of communication strategies. Thus, the researcher would like to present one example as follows:

Tia : “Mm okay, celebrate independent’s day and you must mm [5s] (mengikuti bahasa inggrisnya apa sih?) [a friend answered her: “participate”], oh yes yes participate the competition. Any question?”

The speakers in this discussion apply appeal for assistance strategy as what Tarone proposed. They use that strategy when they get difficult to express what to say next which makes them to do this strategy. And this discussion appropriates with the theory which is proposed by Tarone.

Those previous discussion of the type of communication strategies used by the eighth grade students at SMP N 1 Surakarta shows that the students use all types of seven communication strategies proposed by Tarone.

2) The dominant type of communication strategies

The frequent type of communication strategies which is used by the eighth grade students is native language switching type with 35.29 % which is followed by 19.6 % of miming. Next, the third high number goes to appeal for assistance with the percentage 17.64 %, and followed by message abandonment communication strategies' type which is 15.7 %. Furthermore, message abandonment is followed by 5.89 % of paraphrase which is followed by topic avoidance type of communication strategies which has 3.92 %. And finally, the lowest number goes to coinage or creating new word type of communication strategies with 1.96%.

To conclude, the most frequent type of communication strategies which is used by the eighth grade students is native language switching that is 35.29 %. Meanwhile, the type of communication strategy which is categorized as the most rarely to be used by the students is coinage or creating new word which is only has 1.96 %.

3) The function of communication strategies

The students use the type of communication strategies for some reasons. It implies that the communication strategies do really have functions which help the students during the English conversation. Every type of communication strategies has different functions. Yet, in general, all types of communication strategies has the same function, it is to develop communicative competence

which can be used to reach the communicative communication during the English conversation.

The students use the communication strategies in order to develop their communicative competence in which the students are expected to be able to develop in which communicate messages in various of communicative situation especially in spoken form. In addition, the types of communication strategies which are used to develop students' speaking skill are only paraphrase, coinage, native language switching, miming and appeal for assistance. Since avoiding a topic makes the students avoid a topic which is not friendly for them, it makes them not to upgrade their horizon of the new vocabularies.

Message abandonment has the same case as topic avoidance in which the students stop the conversation before reaching the conversation's goal because of the lack of vocabulary. It implies that they do not improve their horizon of vocabularies which can help in developing speaking skill. So, the discussion of the finding of this research less appropriate with the Tarone's taxonomy and the three previous studies which has presented previously which support that topic avoidance and message abandonment as the strategies to reach a communicative competence in a speaking skill.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, eventually, the researcher can draw the conclusions of the use of communication strategies type in developing speaking skill. The first conclusion is the eighth grade students at SMP N 1 Surakarta use all types of communication strategies appropriate with the taxonomy proposed by Tarone namely topic avoidance, message abandonment, paraphrase, coinage, native language switching, miming and appeal for assistance. They use the types based on their needed and situation which is faced by them. The second conclusion is the dominant type of communication strategies which is used by the students is native language switching strategy which has the highest number, 35.29%.

The third one is the eighth grade students at SMP N 1 Surakarta use five out of seven types of communication strategies in developing their speaking skill through developing their communicative competence in reaching the communicative conversation. The communication strategies which are used to develop their speaking skill are paraphrase, coinage, native language switching, miming and

appeal for assistance. Paraphrase is done by students to make their interlocutor understand the delivered message. Furthermore, coinage strategy is used to express the derived meaning in order to reach the communicative conversation in English. Native language switching type is used by the students to express the derived meaning more easily rather than doing coinage during the conversation. Besides, the students do miming in order to make their intended meaning clearer by using non-verbal communication. Finally, appeal for assistance type is used to reach communicative goal of conversation in English and to make the conversation run smoothly by asking help from other people/ things around the students.

Meanwhile, topic avoidance and message abandonment do not help them in developing speaking skill. Topic avoidance type has a function to avoid occasion when students are getting difficulties during English conversation. Then, message abandonment has a function to handle students' difficulty during English conversation when they are not being able to reach the communicative goal of conversation. Both topic avoidance and message abandonment do not help students in developing speaking skill since the students avoid a topic which is not friendly for them and stopping the conversation before reaching the communicative competence, it makes them not to upgrade their horizon of the new vocabularies.

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